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ABSTRACT

This book aims to explore academic freedom and the threats to it in higher education and among faculty, to present the history of academic freedom over the past 125 years, and to recommend measures to safeguard that freedom. The book argues that current academic zealots view the exercise of standards of academic quality and merit-based performance evaluations as tools of oppression and bigotry. Faculty members who overtly support academic quality may become suspected of bigotry and subject to investigation. The first three chapters document seven waves of ideological zealotry in American higher education since the emergence of the modern university after the Civil War. Chapter 4 examines early "professional academic freedom." Chapter 5 explores the doctrine of constitutional academic freedom in light of Supreme Court interpretations of the First and Fourteenth Amendments. Chapter 6 analyzes court cases on protection of freedom of speech of professors at public universities. Chapter 7 focuses on the prudential doctrine of academic abstention in judicial review of academic decisions. Chapter 8 explores where the theory of academic freedom fails in practice. Chapter 9 asks why faculties and administration often fail to defend professional academic freedom in the face of zealotry and proposes remedial measures. Chapter 10 analyzes current issues and conflicts. Chapter 11 deals with responses to the coercive tactics of the zealots in any period of zealotry. Appendixes contain historical documentation and ethical statements. Includes an index. Chapters contain extensive references. (JB)

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